

The 2015 award recipients

Community Service and Volunteerism



Mary O'Wheatley, Kentucky Real Estate Commission, advocates tirelessly for children, the elderly and veterans. She also volunteers with Crusade for Children, the Dream Factory, Special Olympics, Home of the Innocents, and United Way.

Courage



Brian Brooks, Department of Parks within the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet, responded to a call for assistance while off duty at Natural Bridge State Park. One of the park guests was fatally wounded, and another was critically injured during a flood event. Ranger Brooks assisted in the care of the victims, and notified the other guests at the campground to ensure their safety during the flood.

Customer Service



Gene Coverston, Department of Insurance, Public Protection Cabinet, has an incredible commitment and compassion to the customers she serves. Gene takes extra time to thoroughly explain issues, discuss concerns, listen and show compassion for customers. She also serves on the Mediation Board and works to resolve issues in a fair and unbiased manner.

Leadership



Mark Cummins, Department of Juvenile Justice, Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, demonstrates exceptional leadership skills, and has a genuine concern and commitment to the staff and residents at Campbell Regional Juvenile Detention Center. Mark will do the same work he asks his employees to do, has an open door policy, and takes the time to listen and hear suggestions from staff. He makes sure employees have what they need to run their shifts and allows for creativity when dealing with the youth. Mark takes the time to visit staff when they have a need. When several staff members lost their homes to a tornado, he spent his time off providing supplies and helping clean

Professional Achievement



Ruth Hadley, Department of Parks within the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet, obtained a Bachelor's degree despite tremendous obstacles, commitments and a full-time job as a serving attendant at Lake Cumberland State Resort Park. She was a non-traditional student who decided to pursue higher education when her youngest child started college. While a daughter and son-in-law were both deployed on active duty in Kuwait, she raised her two grandsons for a year. She cared for a terminally ill parent in her home. Her hectic full-time schedule in hospitality often required long hours and weekends. Ruth's victory over obstacles for professional achievement stands as testimony to perseverance and is an inspiration to her coworkers.

Teamwork



The employees with the Department of Military Affairs, Division of Emergency Management, worked long, strenuous hours to ensure that services were provided to citizens during five separate disasters. For weeks at a time, this team of professionals worked around the clock in the State Emergency Operations Center monitoring and coordinating federal, state, local and private resources that provided services and support to those impacted by floods, ice events, snow events and other disasters. These catastrophes caused more than \$50 million in damages to individual homes and businesses as well as the infrastructure of the Commonwealth. Without the dedication and leadership of this team, many Kentucky families would still be struggling to get their needs met and return to a normal life.